

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 49

JANUARY, 1925.

Price 4d.

OUT OF THE RUT

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF

First among the calendars which this year reached us, was a particularly tasteful one from the Skipton Divisional Labour Party, where agent H. Atkinson has done such good work. A matted surface in two shades of grey serves as an admirable background for showing up two real photographs, the first being that of the candidate, Mr. O. G. Willey, whose vigorous personality is well known to many of our readers, and the second being the excellent photograph of the First Labour Cabinet, by Walter Scott, of Bradford. The calendar is a memento which we ourselves shall treasure, and we have little doubt that in the Skipton Division there will be many others which will be proud to display this calendar, and to point out the persons, whose names, along with the candidate's, are household words in Yorkshire.

Another calendar to be noticed is "Walworth's Own Calendar," displaying the photos of Mr. T. E. Naylor, M.P. for Walworth, and Mrs. Naylor. We understand that 10,000 have been issued, and for this enterprise and the extraordinary excellent figures at the General Election, the Local Agent, Mr. C. New, is to be heartily congratulated.

One of the things we were often consulted about at the late election was the problem of the farmer and agriculture generally. Labour has a genuine sympathy with the farmer in many of his problems, but precisely how that sympathy may be expressed, and the farmer made acquainted with it has sometimes proved a problem. In the Keighley Division, Mr. H. B. Lees-Smith regained the seat lost last year, and this reversal of the general trend of the recent election was no doubt to a substantial extent, due to sound electioneering, and the success with which all points of Labour's policy were put before all sections of the community.

We reproduce the excellent imitation typewritten letter specially intended for farmers, which was used at this election.

KEIGHLEY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION,
1924.

Central Committee Rooms,
Russell Street,
Keighley.

October, 1924.

Dear Friend,

I am writing to ask you for your support at this election, and to explain to you the policy of the Labour Party in regard to *Agriculture* and the position of the farmer.

Labour says that we must *stop the migration into the town* as you cannot have a strong and vigorous people without a flourishing agricultural population.

The Labour Party is therefore paying special attention to the position both of labourer and farmer. In order to help the small tenant farmer we believe that the following things must be done immediately:—

1. The farmer must be secured *a proper price for what he sells*. There is too great a difference between the price which he obtains for his products and the price which the public eventually has to pay. This difference is taken by *middlemen*, who in large portions of the country have formed combines, like the Milk Combine in London, and combines for the control of feeding stuffs, etc. The middleman is already represented by Liberals and Conservatives. *It is only just that your interests should be represented by Labour, which is the declared enemy of Trusts and Combines.*

2. The farmer must be given *Security of Tenure*. It believes that one of the essentials of successful farming is that the tenant should be protected from all unwarrantable disturbance.

3. Labour is developing a system for giving *financial help* to farmers who

wish to help themselves, by establishing agricultural credit Banks for this purpose.

Labour, as you know, wishes to improve the position of the great mass of the people in the towns. But in doing this it wishes to help the farmers as well. *Poverty drives the town worker to the consumption of cheap and inferior goods, such as margarine, frozen meat and condensed milk. These have to be imported. Given better conditions, the demand of the town worker for pure home-grown food would add to the sales of the British farmers and prevent our people leaving the countryside.*

Yours sincerely, H. B. LEES-SMITH,
(Labour Candidate).

There is a tendency on the part of Borough Labour Parties in some of the larger divided Boroughs to neglect serious educational work, though propaganda in the nature of big central meetings is commonly indulged in. It is instructive, therefore, to note that the Manchester Borough Labour Party are holding a series of lectures to which members and friends are invited, the venue being the historic Clarion Cafe, Manchester, known, of course, to many hundreds of our readers. The actual syllabus is extremely interesting as, showing the variety of fare offered and the following is a list of the lectures:—

Councillor J. Compton, M.P.: "Municipal and National Banking."

Mr. S. C. Mansford, B.A.: "Seven Days in Paris."

Mr. J. H. Stranding: "Education—dogma or culture?"

Councillor G. Hall: "Money for Nothing."

Mr. Fred Shcofield: "The Postulates of Socialism."

Professor J. J. Findlay: "The Labour Party and the Teacher."

Councillor H. Weate: "Socialism and Industry."

Dr. Walter Carroll: "The Orchestra," with illustrations by the Manchester School Children's Orchestra.

Mr. Douglas Miller: "Secondary Education."

Dr. J. Robinson, M.D., M.Sc.: "Sex."

Dr. Olive A. Wheeler: "Human Nature and Socialism."

Councillor Mary Welch: "Present Tendencies amongst Women."

Mr. T. M. Larrad: "The Problem."

A very effective quarto bill was issued during the General Election in the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool. Printed in bold black letter on a chrome paper was the following message, which we are sure told the tale and told it encouragingly and well.

**WE'RE
VOTING
LABOUR
HERE!
WON'T
YOU?**

CAREFULLY COLLECTING CONTRIBUTIONS AT CAERPHILLY.

A New Type Payment Card.

Our readers will be interested in the reproduction of a members' contribution card which appears on the opposite page, and which has been adopted by the Caerphilly Divisional Labour Party organiser, Mr. Claude Denscombe.

This Party has already introduced a number of useful forms, and ideas for the more systematic development of the Party, and the card reproduced is certainly worthy of imitation. Collectors mark the weekly penny in the stamp space, fixing a fourpenny stamp every four weeks. Sheets of stamps are done up in books. A collecting contribution of 5 per cent. is allowed and of the remainder 50 per cent. is retained by the Local Party and 50 per cent. to the Divisional Party. There are eighteen Local Parties in the Caerphilly Division.

THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

HELP AND HINTS IN SEASON

The "Labour Year Book," which is shortly to be ready should be of special value to the Secretaries of the Party. A tremendous amount of time and a very substantial amount of money has been spent on the production of this book, which will stand out as the most authoritative reference book that the Labour Movement ever published. Most of us have regretted that the "Labour Year Book" has not been a regular annual publication, but we understand that it has now been decided to publish it regularly, though obviously a good deal must yet depend upon the reception which the Labour Movement gives to such a publication, involving so many taxes upon the resources and services of Labour headquarters. There ought really to be a large sale for the new edition of the "Labour Year Book," and Labour speakers and Labour Workers who desire to be really up to date and to know the Labour Movement as they ought to know it, should not fail to have a copy on their bookshelf. Special terms of supply have been offered to local Labour organisations who are actually to be supplied with the book at cost price, on orders of not less than 12 copies. This should be a special inducement to Secretaries for here is a substantial profit to be made.

Another official publication of the Labour Movement which ought to be in the hands of every worker is the report of the Annual Conference of the Party. The report, which is now in the press, is, of course, that of the historic Conference held in the Queen's Hall in October last, and for sentimental reasons alone, there should be a good sale for this copy. The reports of Labour Party Conferences are, of course, the real guide as to what constitutes official Party views, or not, and the perusal of the reports of conference is again and again instructive as to the growth of minority views or the insistence with which the bulk of the Party re-enact this or that point as a tenet in the Labour creed. The report is also an up-to-date directory of the political Labour Movement, and is always replete with tabulated informa-

tion which is invaluable to the Party student and to active workers. Too often Local Parties fail to get a sufficient supply of copies or even to order any at all. We strongly advise Divisional Labour Parties to order 50 copies at the price of £2, even if the cost becomes a charge on Party funds. The expenditure should be worth it.

We note with interest that a number of Parties have already appointed special committees to deal with this year's May Day demonstrations. This note is a reminder to those who have not already done so, that May Day demonstrations need adequate organisation, and that preparation begun well in time always pays; particularly is this the case in regard to the services of speakers. Of late years there has been an extraordinary extension in the May observances, and there are very few districts where Labour does not do honour to the cause and symbol of May Day.

We have received a copy of the "I.L.P. Diary" for 1925, a diary which has become indispensable as the years go by to very many stalwarts in the Movement. This year the diary seems better than ever. In addition to a host of names and addresses of officials in different sections of the Labour Movement, there is a budget of useful information of kindred character concerning the Movement generally, and supplementing this there is a handy guide to the franchise and a complete list of Labour constituencies and candidates at the late election. The diary itself is just the thing which an active spirit in the Movement requires, and there is all sorts of supplementary accommodation for notes and items to be carried into 1926, finishing with a complete calendar for that year. We would strongly recommend Secretaries if they are not already supplied to order their copy of the "I.L.P. Diary."

The collection of individual members contributions for the New Year is an important matter to be early dealt with. We suppose that the majority of Parties still adhere to the annual subscription,

though there is a growing number of Parties who take their subscriptions weekly or monthly. This we anticipate will be the general rule in a year or two; it certainly makes for stability, and now is the time when Parties who have not yet considered the matter might review their intentions for the coming year. Where an annual subscription only has been sought in the past a great leakage of membership has often taken place through lack of any organised system for visiting the old members and collecting their contributions. And we suggest that, as it is necessary in order to retain the greater bulk of the membership, to arrange some sort of visitation, an endeavour should be made to make it permanent and frequent. If it is possible to visit all the members once a year, in most cases it will be found not only possible, but extremely profitable to arrange to visit them twelve times a year. Any Party adopting the plan will be surprised at the returns, and could be guaranteed an increased membership, and a vastly increased activity before the year is out.

THE "L.O." CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT.

The supplement in our December issue containing our Christmas and New Year wishes, and a reproduction of the famous (or infamous) Kingswinford Tory leaflet created considerable interest, and a large number of applications for additional copies of the reproduction have reached us. Fortunately, we have been able to comply with all the demands so far made, though our stock is now exhausted. We note that the Kingswinford leaflet was also reproduced (from the "L.O." reproduction) in the "Labour Woman" for January, together with the "Marriage Lines" leaflet which played an equally sinister part in certain divisions of the country. Apropos the Kingswinford leaflet, Mr. John Baker, M.P., writes:—"I was in the House of Commons when Baldwin made his statement that we have been fishing for votes, and the thing to do was to fish with clean bait. Dick Wallhead handed up one of the leaflets issued at Kingswinford, and it so upset Baldwin that it ruined his speech. He never regained his line of argument after the sight of that leaflet. Up to that time he was making some debating points against MacDonald, but he made none after."

READY SHORTLY!

VOL. IV.

of the

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*Editor Manager, The Labour
Organiser :*

**LADYWOOD
FERNHILL HEATH
Near WORCESTER**

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The majority of correspondents' enquiries which we here deal with have reference to the General Election. Those printed, however, all relate to matters of general interest, and the information passed on will prove of value on a future occasion. All the answers given below were as a matter of urgency answered by post, as were a large number of other enquiries not given here.

Questions.—What is the general practice regarding the adoption of candidates for contesting Local Government Elections? Do Local Labour Parties usually submit nominees to Divisional Party for endorsement or simply carry out the whole thing themselves? Can you tell me what is the standing of a Trades Council in the matter—would they have the same measure of autonomy or would a body of this character be on a different footing? This matter has been for a long time a contentious item and we should be glad of a little information to enable us to clear up same.

Answer.—In the first place it is necessary to distinguish between Local Labour Parties which are working under Set C. of the Labour Party rules and "Polling District Committees" which are not fully-fledged Local Labour Parties, although they are sometimes referred to as such for convenience.

A fully-fledged Local Labour Party is a delegate body and usually covers some Urban, or Rural, or Borough Council area. The question of local candidates is a matter of its own concern, and is governed by Rule 9 (1) of Set C, of Party Rules. It should be remembered however, that a Local Party has a certain moral responsibility, even in these matters, to the Divisional Party, and through the Divisional Party it may be desirable sometimes to co-operate with other areas. It is also advisable that the Divisional Party should sometimes act as a supreme body for the settlement of disputes.

Polling District Committees are of an entirely different composition, and they exist for those parts of a constituency where no Local Labour Party is set up. They are essentially a sub-committee of the Divisional Party, and so although they may call themselves Local Parties they are an integral part of the Divi-

sional Party, who, obviously, must possess a final authority over all sorts of candidates. The selection, however, is left to the Polling District Committees themselves, and it is governed by Rule 6 (4) of Set B.

Regarding the status of a Trades Council in the matter of selecting candidates unless the Trades Council in question is a Local Labour Party it has no authority to select Labour Party candidates. A Trades Council either is or is not a Local Labour Party. If it is, it must adopt the Labour Party rules and the selection of candidates is governed thereby. If the Trades Council is not a Local Labour Party it obviously cannot expect to exercise the rights of one by selecting candidates. An affiliated Trades Council may nominate to the Local Labour Party which covers the area. If there is no Local Labour Party covering the area responsibility appears to lie with the Divisional Labour Party, to whom the Trades Council could make its nominations.

Obviously, local circumstances sometimes vary cases. There are a number of Trades Councils which "hiver and hover" over political action and who desire to select candidates at certain times, while at other times they eschew political action and dissemble that they have nothing to do with politics. It is a curious position, this blowing hot and cold, and the best thing to do is to seek to bring home to the Trades Council concerned, that a desire to nominate candidates or select candidates involves a degree of moral responsibility, which can only be properly met by boldly adopting political action and adding the functions of a Local Labour Party to their present activities.

Question.—Please inform me as to whether you have any back copies which deal with the duties and status of a Local Labour Party Secretary who is called upon to serve as organiser and agent for Labour candidates in Parish, Rural District and County Council Elections?

Answer.—We do not appear to have published any article dealing with the duties and status of a Local Party secretary who is called upon to act as organiser and agent in Local Elections. It would be difficult to generalise upon the matter for circumstances vary very

(continued on page 16.)

WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOST

On an enormously increased vote, but on a straight fight, Labour just lost the seat at Greenwich. There are other constituencies in the same boat, and still more to whom the manner in which the Greenwich Labour Party has faced up to its problem will do good, and hence we have pleasure in reproducing in full in this issue a circular just issued. Our readers will remember that last year we mentioned the vigour with which the Greenwich Labour Party and their agent, Mr. J. H. Round, were pursuing the policy of canvassing all the "fors" promised at the previous election. This course resulted in an extraordinary increase in individual membership, and the same principle is being again adopted.

The circular which we reproduce is folded, tucked in and personally addressed to every person who handed

in the Labour Candidate's poll card. They are distributed by hand and called for in a few days. The first page of the circular itself is printed in imitation typewriting with an autograph signature of Mr. E. T. Palmer, the late M.P., and the other pages speak for themselves.

Much of course depends upon the vim which is put into following up the distribution of such circulars, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the results speak for themselves. We feel sure that not only did the modification of this method, which was adopted by the Greenwich Labour Party last year benefit them by a huge membership, but that it was largely responsible for the nearly 4,000 increase in their poll. Such methods at the earliest possible date should return them the seat. We feel sure they will.

[PAGE 1]

31 Holborn Hall,
Grays Inn Road, W.C.1.,

5th December, 1924.

To the Labour Voters of Greenwich.

My Dear Friend,

Doubtless you share with me the keen disappointment at the loss of the seat in the recent election, but I think you must also share with me the great satisfaction of securing the largest Labour vote in the London area with the exception of Deptford.

Please accept my very best thanks for your support and your work for the cause. I am expecting as a natural result that you will want to identify yourself more closely with the Party than heretofore, and can assure you of a warm welcome into membership.

I have been greatly cheered by the expressions of confidence in my candidature and I have I believe rightly interpreted your wishes in giving my consent to remain at Greenwich as your candidate for the next election. In addition I still want to regard myself as the champion of the workers' cause at Greenwich, and although my powers may be curtailed pending the return to Parliament, there is still much that I can do in the interest of the cause, as our local organisation develops.

We have undoubtedly strengthened our position, and I want to thank you and to ask you to become a member of the Party, pledged to a victory fight next time.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

E. T. PALMER.

If not already a Member why not attach yourself to the Party?

Regular Meetings are held in each Ward or Polling District at which the business of the Party is discussed and the Social side catered for.

Particulars of the various activities can be obtained from the Ward Secretaries whose names and addresses are given below or from the person who will call for your Membership Form.

If You Poll at	Your Ward Secretary is
Maryon Park School	Mr. A. Hunter, 30, Lyndenburgh Street, S.E.7
Fossdene Road School	Mr. E. Green, 5, Calydon Road, S.E.7
Charlton Assembly Rooms	Mr. H. J. Saunders, 54, Woodlands Terrace, S.E.7
Kidbrooke	Mr. H. J. Saunders, 54, Woodlands Terrace, S.E.7
Invicta Road School	Mr. Glenister, 138, Eastcombe Avenue, S.E.7
Halstow Road School	Mr. A. W. Hills, 30, Dupree Road, S.E.7
Calvert Road School	Mr. A. W. Hills, 30, Dupree Road, S.E.7
Dreadnought School	Mr. A. W. Hills, 30, Dupree Road, S.E.7
Old Woolwich Road School	Mr. D. Whittenstall, 55, Old Woolwich Road, S.E.10
Christchurch Hall	Mr. D. Whittenstall, 55, Old Woolwich Road, S.E.10
St. Peter's Hall	Mr. Hollands, 1, Rockfield Street, S.E.10
Royal Hill School	Mr. Woolven, 7, Barling Street, S.E.10
Blackheath Road School	Mr. Woolven, 7, Barling Street, S.E.10
Creek Road School	Miss J. Day, 145 Creek Road, S.E.8

GREENWICH LABOUR PARTY.

Secretary & Agent, J. H. Round, 10 Blackheath Hill, S.E.10
'Phone - - - - - Greenwich 1013.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

I subscribe to the objects and constitution of the Labour Party and desire to become a member.

I am willing to contribute per

Signed

Address

We will be grateful for an introduction to any probable Labour sympathisers if you will be good enough to fill in the Spaces below.

NAME. (State Mr., Mrs. or Miss.)	ADDRESS.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

This Form will be called for in a few days' time.
Kindly have it ready.

If You Value Clean, Honest and Straightforward Journalism
READ THE
"DAILY HERALD."

WORK FOR EVERYBODY NOW.

SEE TO YOUR VOTES.

Mr. Egerton P. Wake, National Agent, the Labour Party, has recently sent a circular to all Labour Parties dealing with the all-important question of registration, and from the Labour Party may be obtained a particularly effective and informative leaflet, entitled "The Sign of your Citizenship." This leaflet gives an outline of men's and women's franchise for Parliamentary and Local Government purposes, and conveys everything which it is necessary for a registration canvasser to know to enable him to answer the queries of those whom he canvasses. £5 would purchase 20,000 of such leaflets printed with the address of local agents and secretaries, and a Local Party, particularly one with Parliamentary responsibilities, commits a serious error of omission if it fails to obtain an adequate supply of these leaflets, and if it fails to initiate an effective effort in registration.

Between now and the 10th February there is abundant time to organise a big push for the purpose of placing on the register those of our supporters who are entitled to be on, and who for some reason or another are not on. In Scotland the last day for claims is five days later.

The present registration period falls most opportunely for almost every type of Labour Party. The languorous days of summer may hamper somewhat the work with the autumn register as may the holiday season, but at this time of the year workers may be got together and neither in town nor country is there any sort of other work that is likely to be neglected if the registration work is seriously done. In Boroughs the Municipal Elections are out of the way, and there is to hand all the material from them with which to sift and seek for claims. In the rural areas the March and April elections are beginning to cast their shadows before them, but work has not yet begun, and a registration effort would in fact prove an excellent trial ground for exercising the forces with which elections are to be won at the District and County Coun-

cil Elections. In over 500 constituencies there is also material which was gained from the recent election canvass records, promises lists, workers' records, and so forth, and it is safe to say that at no period in our Party's history was there such abundant material for effective registration work as exists at this particular hour. Shall we not then get busy?

Let no one suppose that registration work is a difficult and complex proceeding calling solely for skilled and expert direction and the expenditure of substantial sums of money. Nothing is further from the truth; certain it is that a constituency blessed with the services of an agent and organiser can do registration more thoroughly. It can also watch the enemy more closely, carry the war into the registration courts and indulge in the luxury of objections. But apart from these things there is really a vast field of work that might be accomplished by any local Labour Party demanding no more than the exercise of quite ordinary and simple functions, and demanding no more knowledge or skill than is possessed by dozens and even hundreds of workers in almost every constituency. Indeed, if local Labour Parties realise how much there is at stake and how simple the things are that are to be done, there would be no Party but that would take its share in the work. It is good to make converts; it is magnificent to see them cheering themselves hoarse at election meetings, but on the day of the poll it is Tantalus to realise how many of them have been mysteriously missed from the register. There is not a division in the country but where instances galore came to light at the last election of men and women qualified to vote, yet omitted from the registers; and at a contest at the polls Labour has been in the past woefully handicapped by the fact that registration work is most effectively done by its opponents, and almost altogether neglected by ourselves.

Let us see what may be done by a local Labour Party possessing no skilled direction and no expert organiser. In the first place go through the

autumn register, with its new lists, to see that everybody in the Party itself is on the "electors' lists." Now what does this mean? It involves—

- (1) The possession of a "list." This is simply accomplished.
- (2) The possession of lists of names of Party members.
- (3) The organisation of some method by which the register shall be examined.

Now every Party has, we should assume, the names of its members in some accessible form. As members we include not only individual members, but all the persons who as delegates take part in the Party's activities. We would go further and include in our list names of all past delegates; all recent members and heaps of other names that are readily accessible in most Party's records. We can go even further in the case of Labour Parties, who in the past have taken our advice and collected lists of affiliated Trade Unionists. These are members, too.

We do not recommend the stupid course of leaving the above work to the Divisional or Local Party secretary. In 99 cases out of 100 this means piling impossibilities on to an already overworked officer. Means must be found whereby the work is shared by others.

Circumstances differ very widely, for we are speaking generally of both Divisional and Local Parties in counties and boroughs, but the main procedure remains the same wherever the work is undertaken. *The search of the new electors' lists*, in the purely voluntary scheme we are speaking of, is best done in the localities, and the supervision of it and collection of returns only left to the centre.

In most cases it involves committee work of some character—not a talking committee—but a working committee. The committee should first help forward the work of making present records available. Thus the secretary may have all his names in a book, and it means copying these names out and supplying them to the localities; or the committee, in bad instances, may be involved in a great deal of work to record who are Party members and workers. Anyway, the initial stages involve that the *material should be made available and then passed on to the districts with the appropriate sections of the lists.*

Again in the localities a committee is best, and in co-operation, each man or woman doing a little, the lists should be searched to see if everybody who is in the Party or on its borders has got the vote.

From the above beginning, and following the same simple rules, registration work can be extended indefinitely. Thus the returns of past election canvasses may be dealt with. The names of members of Trades Unions can be searched for, or even a special canvass might be organised to ascertain the names and addresses of residents and the register be similarly searched.

Wherever all, or any, of the above work has been accomplished a number of names will inevitably be found who are not on the register, and a few simple rules could soon be made by which each of these persons is automatically visited for the purpose of finding out whether or no they are definitely entitled. If they are entitled then claim forms should be made out, and the claim lodged by the 10th February (Scotland 15th February).

In all broad democratic schemes for doing registration work, such as we have outlined, we recommend that particular responsibility should lie on some officer or another for seeing that the lists of persons not on the register are *properly visited and claims brought in*. It is no use searching the register if the claims are not going to be sought for, or if claims are to be brought in too late. A real live and alert officer is required to watch this work for it is the most essential of all.

Apart from searching the electors' list and making claims, there is the further work of checking the new lists of persons added and "no longer entitled." This is not, of course, so productive of claims, but cases will be found of persons wrongly dropped off the register just as in the new list of persons added cases will be found of persons whose title to be on is extremely doubtful. Both these classes of cases should be investigated by visits from the Local Committees, and the appropriate course taken.

One of the greatest factors in getting the registration work done in the districts and by Local Committees is that local knowledge often plays the greatest part in making claims. Thus it is

known, for instance, that — has sons who ought to be on the register, or that Mr. and Mrs. — have rooms with another person. It is these classes of cases which are most generally "off." The persons are known to our local people, and the examination of the register sometimes becomes an interesting and fascinating pastime.

One of the things to be aimed at in doing Labour registration work is to seek to popularise the hall-mark of citizenship, which is what being "on the register" really is. It is by no means a bad thing to read off the names of a small polling district at any meeting organised therein, and persons missed off can be invited to make known the fact. In towns the register can be examined street by street, house by house, by local members of the Party, and this is always an essential proceeding, apart from searches, but in country districts alphabetical registers make the remembrance even of one's neighbours in the same lane rather difficult, and so some means must be devised to get over the difficulty.

Wherever registration work is attempted we strongly advise the issue of literature with it. A supply of the leaflets mentioned above certainly ought to be obtained, and we have advocated very little expense beyond this. Visits to voters' homes can also be made the opportunity for distribution of real propaganda stuff, or invitations to membership. Ordinarily speaking, even the most discouraged canvassers at election times can indulge in registration work, for queries are mostly simple and the business to be done at voters' homes is straightforward and not of that argumentative character that some canvassers get timid of at election times.

It must not be forgotten that another kind of claim can be lodged up to the 24th February (or the 25th February in Scotland). These claims are on behalf of those who may be expected to be absent from home on a polling day and who therefore may, under the Act, claim to be registered as "Absent Voters," and accordingly vote by post. Local Labour Parties should persist in seeing that this legal right is fully advertised, fought for and exercised. It is of special value to railwaymen and others similarly placed.

URGENT

BACK COPIES of THE LABOUR ORGANISER

Will readers who have spare copies of the following issues of the "Labour Organiser" be good enough to sell them to the Editor immediately. Full wholesale price paid—

JANUARY 1924.

SEPTEMBER 1924.

Most numbers prior to 1924 are entirely out of print. Readers discovering spare copies will always oblige by notifying the Editor.

PHILOSOPHY.

With Much of Which We Agree.

Perhaps the most dismal critics are the old-fashioned Members of Parliament and their crusted election agents. They find the modern election a trying ordeal from which they rarely emerge with credit, and it is not altogether unnatural if their hearts turn fondly to the 'good old days' when electorates were smaller and more amenable to the influence of the squire and the parson.

I have little doubt that the Old School will condemn many of the ideas I have put forward. They will tell me I am trying to degrade politics into a mere business.

Why it should be specially heinous to organise anything—even politics—on business lines, will continue to remain a mystery to me. Nevertheless, many conservative minds undoubtedly so regard it.

My answer to all such critics is a business man's answer. Experience proves that the newspaper proprietor who continues to conduct his paper on the old dull, stodgy and 'respectable' lines loses his money, and it equally proves that the agent who tries to fight his campaigns on the old-fashioned methods loses seats.

The old methods will do no longer. The party agent is losing elections to-day wherever he is met by an up-to-

TO LABOUR PARTIES.

The I.L.P. Information Committee has large stocks of
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 "WEEKLY NOTES FOR SPEAKERS."

date opponent, for the simple reason that the old rule-of-thumb methods laid down in the party Agent's Manual were formulated when the character of electorates was entirely different from what it is to-day.

I am going to remind my staid and eminently proper fellow-agents that new factors are operating in election politics.

Since the Reform Act of 1832 the electors of the United Kingdom have increased from 1,000,000 to 14,000,000, to whom 6,000,000 are women. Whereas then only one in every fifty of the population could exercise the franchise, now under the Representation of the People Act, 1918, one in every three of the population has the right to vote.

Such giant strides in our political evolution cannot be taken without a complete transformation of the problem of electioneering. A new type of elector has been admitted to the franchise in vast numbers, and the method of appeal that once did service now fails dismally.

The plain truth is—and I state it bluntly—far more brains are needed to win elections nowadays than was the case in the "good old days."

As a result, the old style of election

address, full of noise signifying nothing, is laughed to scorn by the average electorate to-day. My own view is that a new type of agent, with a new conception of his functions, is necessary. He must be much less of a politician and much more of a publicity expert than his predecessor.

The sooner the agent ceases to delude himself with the idea that his concern is with politics—which is purely the concern of the candidate—and gets on with his job as the publicity and business manager of a political client, the better it will be for his candidate.

Elections to-day are mainly won by the printed word. For every voter who can be found to listen to a speech, a score can be attracted by a brightly written leaflet, a smart poster, or a clever newspaper article. Hence the task of the political agent is one for the expert who possesses a complete knowledge of all the arts of publicity.

With politics, qua politics, the agent has no concern. He should be a business man, handling a business proposition in a businesslike way by means of a well-organised machine under his control.—H. S. HOUSTON, in *Modern Electioneering Practice*.

LABOUR OUT *but not* "OUTED"

IN some ways its a good thing—it was bound to come. and we could not help ourselves. And Labour can probably do as much good in the firm position of a sturdy opposition as in the insecure one of a minority Government. What we have now to do is to work with all our strength ready for the next struggle. Use all publicity we can, broadcast our aims and ideals as have never been done before.

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Manager

LOCAL NEWSPAPER MEMS.

We are interested to note that under the able guidance of Mr. A. J. Thatcher the monthly journal of the Stockton and Thornaby Labour Party has now been running for two years, and is still paying its way. This should be an example to those of little faith (and perhaps of less enterprise) in other places. After a very dark night local Labour newspapers are in several places now struggling into light with renewed usefulness and profit.

Another growth to note is that the "Labour Member" previously noticed in our columns as a typewritten sheet issued in the Westhoughton Division has now been definitely launched as a printed monthly, and from February it is to be issued on the first day of each month. The Christmas and New Year issue before us in an interesting four-page production well illustrated and of varied contents. The "Labour Member" should help to keep the seat safe and warm for Mr. R. J. Davies, M.P., whose portrait, and that of his family, graces the first page.

The "Watford Labour Gazette" made its first appearance with the New Year. It is a small four-page production the first issue of which, apart from a page of New Year messages from Labour Party Leaders, is certainly rather a gazetteer than a monthly newspaper or magazine. For instance the front page contains a diary of Watford Labour activities for January, together with a list of Party Officers, Trades Unions and other Labour Organisations. The fourth page is given over to necessary advertisements. There is not much space, therefore, left in the first issue for the usual matter which appears in Labour journals, whether based on the Labour News Service or locally written. We presume that succeeding issues will have room for short articles and perhaps at least a column with a home appeal. In wishing the "Gazette" a long life we join with it our hopes in the above respect.

The Finsbury "Star" is another newcomer the first edition of which appeared in time for Christmas. The paper is based on the Labour News Service and is of the orthodox News Service size. Ten thousand copies of

the Finsbury "Star" are to be printed and the paper is therefore to be run in real earnest. The first issue is well supplied with advertisements and the whole production has a clean and well-printed appearance. The local Member of Parliament, Mr. George M. Gillett, M.P., sends a seasonable message and contributes an article on the "Opening Scenes of the New Parliament." There is much need for local Labour Newspapers in London, and we sincerely hope that the business side of this journal will continue to prosper and so aid in keeping its undoubted propagandist value as a weapon in the hands of the Party.

We have before noted in this journal several embryo sheets of a typewritten character which through perseverance and devoted service have in time blossomed into more orthodox and effective papers. We therefore always extend a welcome to the typewritten and duplicated periodical when first it appears in any locality, and we are not without remembrance that the first issue of our own "L.O." was typewritten. The Bolton Labour News is a two-page foolscap typewritten and duplicated paper edited by Mr. H. Eastwood, and in the December copy before us quite a budget of interest has been crowded in. The paper is at present mostly confined to matter of interest within the Party itself. Fortunately, in the case of such a news sheet the appetite grows with what it feeds on, and so in due course we shall hope to welcome a bigger paper and one that is intended for the public.

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TWO TELLING PAMPHLETS.

Any trouble with the Liberals down your way? If so we have a remedy to suggest. Buy a quantity of "Six Months of Liberalism" (advertised at a reduced rate by the I.L.P. in this issue).

For the third time in four months we have just again read this pamphlet; and we like it. As an exhilaration it is good to the converted, and as a curative it is excellent for any case-hardened Liberal. The Liberal who can seriously read these 24 damning pages and retain his faith, is past praying for. Incidentally and consequently we must strongly advise Local Parties to buy a stock of these pamphlets at the new price and distribute now.

* * *

Equally good and in every way still up to date is "Six Months of Labour Government," also offered by the I.L.P. at a cheap rate. This is certainly an opportunity and someone has seemingly caught the sale fever. "Six Months of Labour Government" is a 24 pp. pamphlet of a kind that should be given to thoughtful people and waverers. It will soak in. The question might well be asked as to whether we have yet made enough of Labour's great work in office—much of it silent and unobserved. Well, here is a renewed opportunity, and we advise a resolution "that we purchase—hundreds for free distribution."

(continued from page 6).

much and one could not lay down precise standard duties or a standard status for a secretary in these matters. We have, of course, dealt with the conduct of Rural District Council Elections, and other Local Elections, and we also regularly publish hints to secretaries under the title of "The Secretary's Page."

Question.—Will you kindly advise me where to get registration forms for unofficial numerators, and leaflets for canvass?

Answer.—Our correspondent will, of course, be able to obtain leaflets suitable for registration canvassers direct from the Labour Party. Nothing better in fact is available than the latest leaflet "The Sign of your Citizenship." Regarding registration forms, try Shaw & Sons, 7/8, Fetter Lane, London, E.C., or Knight & Co., Ltd., 227, Tooley Street, London, S.E.1.

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